



Empower Change: Workload management of nurses caring for people with multiple sclerosis

Background

MS Nurse PROfessional is an educational programme and community to train and support nurses caring for people with MS (PwMS). With over 1000 active members across Europe, it serves as a platform to increase knowledge, enhance skills and share expertise.

Aims and objectives

As part of advocating for improved working conditions, MS Nurse PROfessional conducted a survey to understand current workload practices of neuroscience nurses in Europe that care for PwMS, and their opinions on potential solutions to address unfinished tasks.

Methods

Developed by the Steering and Syllabus Committee of MS Nurse PROfessional, the online survey included questions about demographics, professional background and workload management when caring for PwMS. Questions were reviewed by board members from Rehabilitation in Multiple Sclerosis (RIMS) and piloted by 6 nurses from our community, with the survey available in 10 languages. MS Nurse PROfessional community members were invited to participate. The survey ran from February 1, 2024 to June 30, 2024. Final results and findings are reported here.

Conclusions

This survey of nurses caring for PwMS shows the specialised tasks nurses perform in symptom management, treatment monitoring and educating the PwMS.

The survey also confirms that a caseload of in excess of 300 PwMS is common among MS Nurses.

Conclusions that can be drawn from the survey suggest that increasing the number of nurse colleagues, increasing the availability of administrative support and access to psychological support for PwMS and increasing the ability to refer to a multidisciplinary care team can all contribute to enabling MS Nurses to focus on their specialised and essential tasks to support the wellbeing of all PwMS in their care.



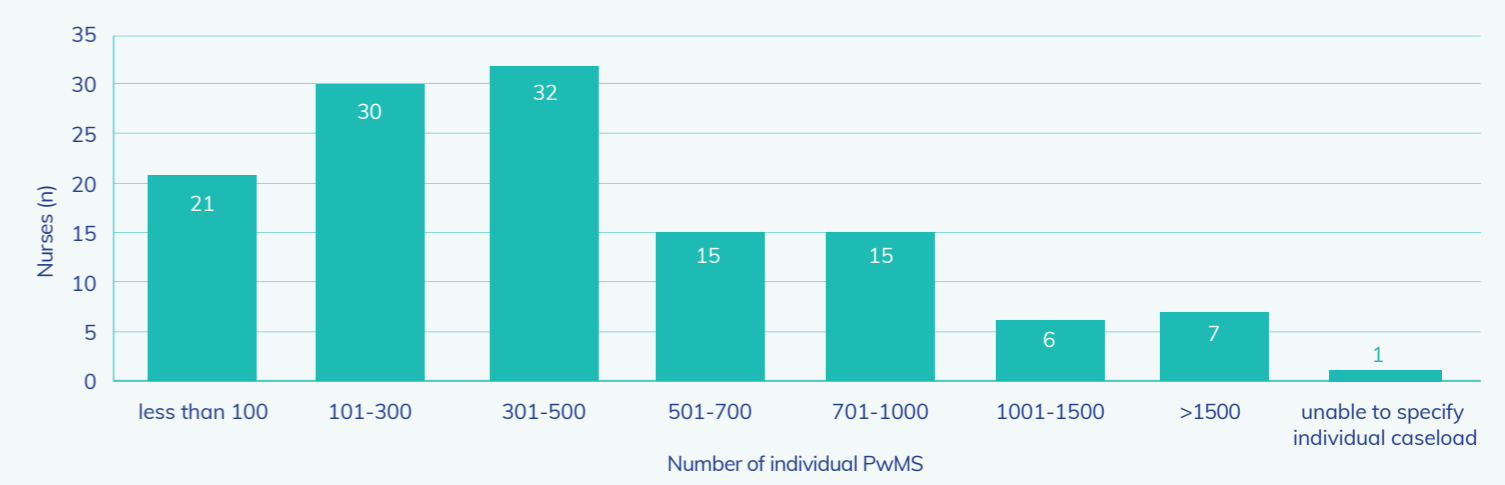
Results

127 nurses from 21 countries completed the survey.

The average completion time was 11 minutes, representing over 23 hours of data input.

- 59% (n=75/127) of respondents have a caseload >300 PwMS per year, who they see ≥2 times/year, spending between 30 minutes and 3 hours including consultation and follow-up tasks at each visit.

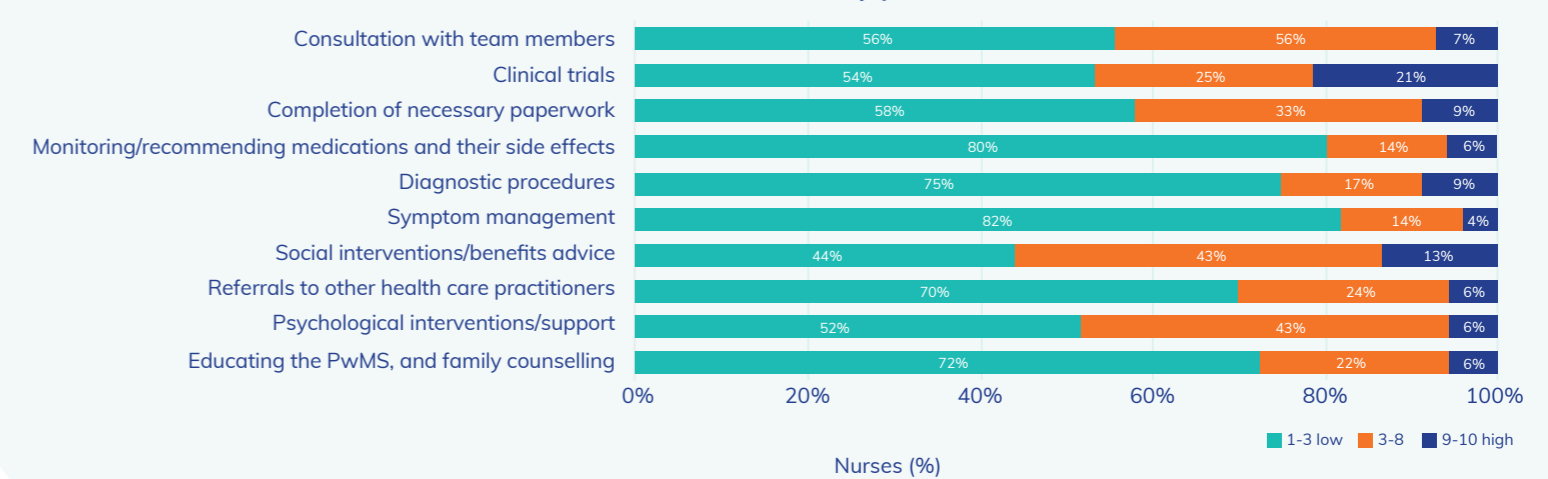
Average nurse caseload of individual PwMS per year (one patient = 1 caseload, irrespective of number of consultations) (n=127)



- Work left unfinished due to time constraints includes clinical trials, social benefits advice, diagnostic procedures and paperwork completion. Over half of nurses surveyed have no or limited administrative support.

Work left undone

(% nurses were asked to score each task where 1 = no type of this work is left undone and 10 = a lot of this type of work is left undone)



- Nurses (n=127) dedicate the majority of their time to symptom management, completion of necessary paperwork, treatment selection/monitoring and educating the PwMS and their family.

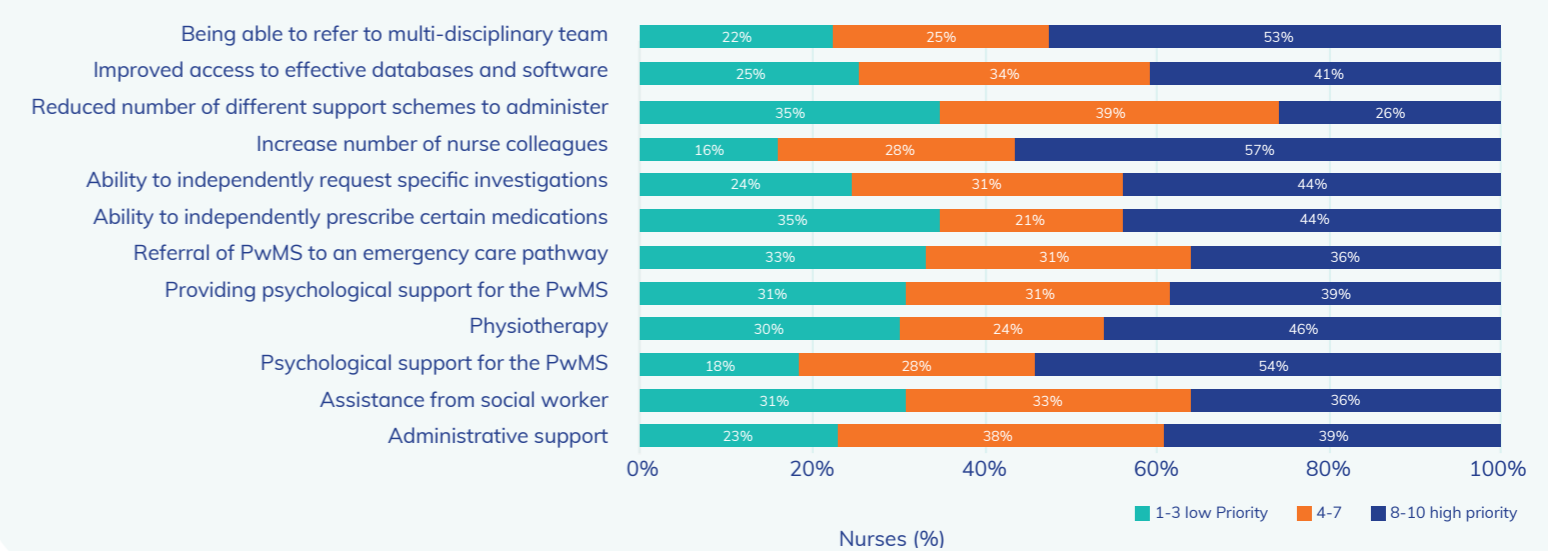
% of working time assigned to tasks

Task	0-5%	5-15%	16 - >25%
Treatment selection/monitoring, management of side effects	16%	24%	61%
Symptom management	9%	29%	62%
Educating the PwMS, and family/general counselling	19%	29%	52%
Completing necessary paperwork (electronic patient files, etc)	13%	25%	61%
Diagnostic procedures (e.g. blood drawing, clinical or technical test procedures)	33%	17%	50%

- The findings indicate that the nursing community is advocating for an increase in the number of nurse colleagues (57%), increased access to psychological support for the PwMS (54%), and the ability for nurses to refer to a multidisciplinary care team (52.8%).

Priority of potential solutions

(% nurses were asked to score each task where 1 = not a priority and 10 = highest priority)



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